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# America joins the World





U. S. President, 1913 - (Wilson)

# AMERICA JOINS THE WORLD

Selections from the  
Speeches and State Papers  
of  
President Wilson  
1914-1918

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

*"The greatest, most fruitful fact of the Great War was the coming together of Europe and America."*—GENERAL SMUTS.



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TO  
THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS OF THE  
UNITED STATES

*who have served in the Great War, this little book is dedicated,*

*that they may keep in remembrance  
the great objects for which they  
have served;*

*that they may see clearly what their  
service has accomplished for  
their country and the world;*

*that they may gain a fresh realiza-  
tion of what this Republic  
means, and may yet mean, to  
mankind; and*

*that they may thus carry with them,  
as they go back to the tasks of  
peace, a renewed sense of the  
grave and splendid privilege of  
American citizenship.*

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## INTRODUCTION

As these words are written, the bells are pealing and the whistles blowing to celebrate the coming of peace. It may, therefore, seem a strange time to publish a collection of utterances setting forth the aims of America in the War. Yet, in truth, the speeches and letters in this little book are scarcely less timely now than when they were first given to the world. For a war is not like a boys' game, the whole purpose of which is accomplished when the victory is won. The things that brave men have died in battle to win will need to be conserved by the less costly loyalty of other men through the long days of peace that we hope will follow; and that they may not forget how precious those things are, men will wish to see them again with the eyes of the generation that fought and sacrificed for them, will seek to renew in themselves the ideals and to catch once more the spirit of the heroic age in which it has been our privilege to live. And even at this moment of the war's ending, it is well that all who have had a part in gaining the victory should remind themselves of the greater objects for which they have been striving—objects sometimes lost to sight in the stress of the conflict—and should ask themselves what yet remains to be done in order that those objects may be fully accomplished and that the War may bring to mankind benefits worthy of the immeasurable sacrifices which it has demanded. For, great as is the goal already reached, it marks the completion of but the first half of a single task.

Here, then, are brought together the principal writings and discourses in which the spokesman and chief magistrate of the American democracy during the

Great War interpreted the meaning of that war to his countrymen. The volume contains a part of the record of the progressive rediscovery of America by itself, which was followed (as a French writer has said) by a second discovery of America by Europe. The conception of America's duty and opportunity, of its meaning and vocation in the world, which the President, and the country under his leadership, had reached at the end of four years of the European War, was not the same as that which they held at the beginning, though it grew naturally out of principles to which the country had long been committed. It is the purpose of these introductory paragraphs to call the reader's attention to the phases of this progress, and to point out something of the natural logic by which those phases developed one out of another.

People in France and England and Belgium have sometimes been puzzled to understand how it was possible that so many Americans, President Wilson seemingly among them, should have taken more than two years to realize that this war was, from the first, one in which America had as deep a concern as any other nation. It is important that American soldiers and others who talk with our Allies about these matters should help them to understand what it was that held us back so long. There were three chief reasons for our delay. The first was the fact that, during the earlier months of the War, the full realization of the spirit and purposes of the German government, and of the methods of its warfare and its diplomacy, had not been brought home to us. Some of the most monstrous of its crimes had already been committed; but the stories of such things seemed to many to be too bad to be true, and the evidence for them was not yet what it was presently to become—complete and overwhelm-

ing. A second reason for staying out of the conflict—a reason which clearly had especial weight with President Wilson—was the feeling that America could best serve mankind by keeping its spirit calm and unembittered, and by avoiding offense to either side, so that our Government might, when the time came, be the better able to serve as a friendly mediator between the warring European peoples. It was in this way, so it for a time seemed to President Wilson, that America could best “keep herself fit and free to do what is honest and disinterested and truly serviceable for the peace of the world.”

But there was a third cause of our holding aloof which was more important than either of these two which have been mentioned; and it is one which people in Europe usually do not realize. This cause was the influence of the long-accepted idea that the first rule of the foreign policy of the United States should be to refrain from meddling in the quarrels of the countries of the Old World. This idea, which has been called “the tradition of American isolation,” owed much of its influence to the fact that it was supposed to have behind it the authority of George Washington. In his Farewell Address in 1796, Washington warned the people of this country against “entangling our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice.” “Europe,” he declared, “has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote, relation. Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.” President Washington’s warning

did not, in reality, have the meaning which it has often been supposed to have. He was advising only against “permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world”; and his advice was addressed to a young and little country, threatened by many dangers. It has, however, long been customary to quote the first president as opposed to all “entangling alliances” and to every form of intervention in Europe’s affairs.

But it was not only to the great name of Washington that this “tradition of isolation” owed its strength. It expressed also a certain natural way of thinking about the kind of service which America was meant to render to mankind. To many good Americans it for a long time seemed that the New World could fulfil its own destiny only by keeping itself untroubled by the ancient controversies and untouched by the ancient corruptions of less fortunate lands. America, many have felt, represents a new era in human history, a more wholesome, more happy, more humane chapter in the records of men’s living together upon the earth. To the people of the older countries it was to be a haven of refuge in which they might be assured of escape from despotism and from the wars and the disorders which despotisms breed. It therefore must stand outside the circle of the rivalries and even of the friendships of the European nations, must build up its own civilization undistracted by the incessant wranglings of the quarrelsome continent across the Atlantic.

What most Europeans fail to understand is the strength of the hold which this way of thinking long had upon the minds of most Americans. But without understanding this, it is impossible for anyone to appreciate how hard it was for America to see that it was really concerned in an European war; how truly President Wilson’s speech of April 2, 1917, opened a new

chapter in the history of the United States and of the world; and how astonishing a thing it was, from the older American point of view, that American boys should be fighting on the ancient battlefields of France and Flanders, and that an American president, in conjunction with the leaders of the free nations of Europe, should be bidding Old World emperors surrender their rule over the lands they had misgoverned.

But during the years from 1914 to 1917 the President and the country gradually came to see that America could not, either with honor or with safety, continue to live apart, an irresponsible if not an indifferent spectator of the Old World's tragedy. And the German government spared no pains to perfect the education of the American people in this matter. Month after month they drove the lesson home. They showed us that our supposed isolation was an illusion. At a time when our people still wished earnestly to keep out of the European conflict, Germany brought the conflict to our doors, using our territory as a base of operations for acts of war, or for illegal and often murderous intrigues, against neighbors with whom we were at peace, and against our own citizens. *Our* political vision might be limited to the Western hemisphere, but Germany's plans and machinations knew no corresponding limits; they took in the whole world, and dragged the whole world into a general maelstrom of evil. Above all, the German government made certain that Americans should realize that any great modern nation has interests which reach far beyond its own boundaries; that, besides its exclusive ownership of certain territory, it has a joint ownership in the common highway of all nations, the sea, so that its elementary and essential rights can be invaded as truly upon the high seas as upon its own soil. We saw American citizens,

"acting within their indisputable rights in taking their ships and traveling wherever their legitimate business called them," deliberately done to death by the agents of the German government, in defiance of clear and recognized principles of international law. And so the tradition of American isolation went down with the pitiful victims of the "Lusitania," the "Sussex," the "Laconia," and the "Vigilancia."

Nevertheless, the influence of that tradition had been strong enough to prevent the United States from going to war until after Germany had thus repeatedly committed acts of war against the United States, and had made unmistakable her determination to persist in such acts. Whatever the President's personal judgment on this matter may have been, the temper of the country, as it seemed, was not ripe for war until it became clear that the only alternative was abject submission to German aggression. Of this fact few Americans, probably, are now proud. If Germany's "overt acts" of February and March, 1917, had never been committed—if, indeed, the "unrestricted" submarine campaign had never been begun—there would still have been overwhelming reasons why we should have taken our place beside France and England, Belgium and Italy and their Allies, in saving the world from Prussian domination. But those reasons did not become fully plain to the American people until war had been forced upon us over an issue in which our own rights and honor and security were more directly and evidently involved.

Yet there is one thing which it is important to note in nearly all President Wilson's utterances before 1917 concerning Germany's violations of American rights at sea. From the first he saw in these crimes not simply an affront to America's honor and an injury to Amer-

ica's interests, but a still graver thing—an affront against the law of nations and an injury to one of the most fundamental interests of all peoples. Acquiescence in Germany's wrongdoing against the United States, he wrote to Senator Stone, (page 33) "would be an implicit, all but an explicit, acquiescence in the violation of the rights of mankind everywhere, and of whatever nation or allegiance. It would be a deliberate abdication of our hitherto proud position as spokesman, even amid the turmoil of war, for the law and the right." Let expediency take the place of principle in one such instance, "and the whole fine fabric of international law might crumble under our hands piece by piece." Upon maintaining the integrity of this fabric, the President saw, depends in the long run the good order and security of the entire world; and it was always as a part of this universal interest of mankind, and not as a thing separate and peculiar, that he looked upon the maintenance of the rights of American seamen, travelers, and shipmasters. The United States, he repeatedly wrote, sought nothing for itself but what it wished "to share with all free peoples." Thus our controversy with Germany over her methods of submarine war was a test case for a larger issue; and throughout the controversy Mr. Wilson kept that larger issue steadily in view. When, therefore, war finally came, it came as a war, not over the submarine question, but over the question whether respect for the law of nations, the rights of peoples, and the public order of the world, was to be enforced in the present instance, and permanently assured for the future. As the President said in September, 1918, with the American people "national purposes have fallen more and more into the background, and the common purpose of enlightened mankind has taken their place."

If one were to try to sum up in a single phrase the pith of the discovery which brought America out of its old isolation and into the war, it perhaps could be described best as the discovery of the "priority of the international problem." We found that there is a certain order in which reforms have to be taken up—and that we had been taking them up without sufficient regard to this order. We in America had been immensely busy developing the country and trying to improve conditions within our own borders. Many people of "forward-looking minds," here as elsewhere, had caught a vision of a better way in which human beings might live and work together, of a larger measure of "social justice" between man and man. And so absorbed were we in these tasks that most of us failed to see that none of the gains which we might make at home, none of the reforms which we might accomplish, were secure against sudden destruction, so long as there were no guarantees of order and of justice between nation and nation. So interdependent had civilized countries become in modern times that—as the events of 1914 showed—a single people, filled with ambition and national vanity, might in a moment set the whole world afire, undo the results of the labors of many generations, and almost bring the entire structure of civilization to ruin. Here, then, we came to realize, is a situation which we must put an end to, before we can go on with our efforts to make human life here in America finer and happier, and the dealings of our own people with one another more just, more law-abiding and more fraternal. Otherwise, we should be as those who pour water into a sieve.

Thus it was that the people which had, perhaps, been the least "international-minded" of all great modern peoples, made ready to devote its manhood and its

resources "without stint or limit" to an essentially international object—to no less an object than the settlement upon a just and lasting basis of the general problem of international relations. "What we demand in this war," the President said, "is that the world be made fit and safe to live in, and in particular that it be made safe for *every* peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair-dealing by the other nations of the world." "We can," in the words of yet another address, "in no circumstances consent to live in a world governed by intrigue and force. We believe that our own desire for a new international order under which reason and justice and the common interests of mankind shall prevail is the desire of enlightened men everywhere. Without that new order the world will be without peace and human life will lack tolerable conditions of existence and development. Having set our hand to the task of achieving it, we shall not turn back."

What, broadly, was required for the establishment of this new international order was clear. It meant that we must bring it about that hereafter "the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states." But in civilized states individuals live an organized community life. And we all know very well what minimum conditions must be fulfilled in order that a community of individuals may be safe, orderly, fit for rational beings to live in. There must be recognized laws, binding upon all the members of the community; there must be recognized rights belonging to the individual members; there must be respect for contracts voluntarily entered into; and

above all, the enforcement of laws, of rights, and of contracts, must not be a casual and private matter, left to the individuals who, in any given case, may be immediately concerned, but must have behind it the entire organized force of the community. There must be machinery for punishing members who seek their own interest at the expense of the interest of the community and in defiance of its laws; in other words, the community must see to it that violence and dishonesty and all forms of lawlessness are made exceedingly unprofitable to any who may be rash enough to engage in them—since experience unhappily shows that so long as they are profitable some men will continue to practice them. Finally, in any tolerable community life there must be something more than all these things; there must, namely, be a community spirit, a prevalent habit of good will, born of the experience of working together at common tasks and for common ends.

The chief purpose of the United States in the war, then—as President Wilson has again and again set forth—has been to cooperate in getting realized among independent states these familiar conditions of a decent and endurable community life. And this fundamental purpose implied five very definite and practical consequences.

1. It meant, in the first place, that no outcome of the war short of an absolute and unmistakable defeat of the Central Empires could be tolerated by the United States. Germany and her allies had consistently acted upon the belief that the way to national greatness and prosperity lies through the breaking of treaties, perpetual intrigue against other nations, habitual violation of international law, and complete disregard of all considerations of humanity. The first thing needful then—if America's purpose was to be realized—was to prove

beyond a peradventure that this spirit and these methods are as ruinous to a state as their counterparts in ordinary social life are ruinous to the individuals who resort to them. Those who looked upon the war as a mere conflict of national interests and ambitions might perhaps be ready, when things were not going well, to end the terrible struggle by some process of give-and-take. But America's aim implied from the first that "no peace can be obtained by any kind of bargain or compromise with the Central Empires, . . . or by any abatement of the principles we have avowed as the principles for which we are fighting." The necessary first step towards the introduction of a new age of international order and justice must be a demonstration by example—by so great and unmistakable an example that coming generations of men can never forget it—that not even the most powerful of nations has more power than the law, and that violation of the rights even of little peoples is an eminently unprofitable enterprise even for the greatest. For with nations as with individuals it is true that, so long as violence and lawlessness are profitable, some are likely to continue to practice them.

2. This object, moreover, required more than reparation by Germany for all the destruction she has wrought in Belgium and France and upon the sea, and the restoration of all the territory and property she has stolen during the present war. The process of restitution must begin farther back. For perhaps the chief cause of this war was the fact that Germany *had*, more than once within a half-century, found enormous profit in bad faith and intrigue and aggression. She had been the bandit state in Europe, and she had found that banditry paid. Her recent prosperity was based largely upon the indemnity she had exacted,

and upon the mineral deposits of the territory of which she had robbed France, in 1871. These older gains of her evil-doing, as well as the more recent, must be taken from her. The question of Alsace-Lorraine concerned the United States as well as France—not simply because of the old friendship between the two republics, nor solely because of France's service to America during our struggle for independence—but, above all, because the international objects we had set before ourselves in this war could not be realized so long as Germany profited and France suffered by the great wrong done less than fifty years ago.

3. But America's aim in the war implied something yet more sweeping; it required nothing less than a literal "remodeling of the map of Europe." For the new international order, if it was to assure justice in the future, could not begin by ignoring the long-standing and still flagrant injustices of the present European situation. Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Turkey held in subjection to their alien and oppressive rule a number of highly gifted peoples, capable of self-government and passionately eager for independence and for the free development of their national life. With the aspirations of these peoples for freedom, our own history and traditions would under any circumstances have made us deeply sympathetic; yet it is probably true that we should not have crossed the ocean to fight for the independence of the Czecho-Slovaks or the Poles or the Jugo-Slavs, unless we had come to see each of these separate struggles for liberty in the light of its relation to the general problem of international order and security and fair-dealing. But when we once set ourselves to deal with that problem, it became very clear that it could never be solved so long as these old oppressions were not ended. A plan for preventing future

wars would have little prospect of succeeding, and would as little deserve to succeed, if it attempted merely to perpetuate the existing state of things in Europe and Western Asia, with all its iniquities unrectified. Thus the war which America entered first of all for the vindication of law and the establishment of lasting peace and security between nations, became also a War of European Liberation. That day of January 8, 1918, when President Wilson first publicly proclaimed America's recognition of the relation between her fundamental purpose in the War and the claims of the submerged and oppressed nationalities of Europe, and declared that the American people were ready "to devote their lives, their honor, and everything they possess" to the support of those claims, was a very great day in modern history. More plainly even than those memorable days of April of the preceding year, it made evident what far-reaching consequences must follow the cooperation of the great Republic of the New World in the solution of the difficulties of the Old. It was a fit beginning for what was to prove the Year of Victory.

4. The three special aims thus far mentioned, though involved in the fundamental purpose with which America entered the War, had already been made their own by the European Allies, and had been powerfully expressed by their representative statesmen. But there is, in this "war of ideas," a fourth idea which was introduced into it chiefly by President Wilson—the idea of democracy. About the relation of this to the primary object of the War, as conceived by Mr. Wilson, there has been a good deal of misunderstanding.

Many have supposed that the destruction of autocratic government in general, and of the German variety of it, in particular, was itself the primary object of America's effort. The War has sometimes been rep-

resented as a sort of crusade for the diffusion of the democratic faith and the establishment of republican institutions in countries which did not yet possess them. Yet this interpretation of our purpose has more than once been repudiated by President Wilson. "We intend," he declared to Congress in his Annual Message of 1917, "no interference with the internal affairs of the German Empire." Such interference "we should deem absolutely unjustifiable, absolutely contrary to the principles we have professed to live by and to hold most sacred throughout our life as a nation." So again in the speech on peace terms (January 8, 1918), the President said: "We do not presume to suggest to Germany any alteration or modification of her institutions."

It is nevertheless true that Mr. Wilson, more than any other leader in the warring nations, has taught his countrymen, and, indeed, all mankind, to look upon the war as a fight to the finish between democracy and the last great autocracy in Europe; has made it a constant object of his policy to bring about the overthrow of the imperial régime in Germany; and has now seen this policy crowned with success. How are these facts to be reconciled with his protestations of unwillingness to dictate to the German people with respect to the character of their domestic institutions?

The answer can be seen only when it is understood that, for the President, the issue of democracy has entered into the War only in so far as it is related to the one fundamental purpose upon which he has so often insisted—the establishment of international justice and of lasting peace. Not because we wished to impose free government upon peoples contented with their chains, but because a great and powerful and ambitious people so contented was a perpetual menace to the

free governments of other nations, has it been our policy so to shape the situation that the Germans themselves would rise against their rulers. Not to make the world democratic, but at least to "make the world safe for democracy," has been our war-program. And the existing German imperial system was in two ways, as it seemed to Mr. Wilson, an obstacle to the realization of that program. In the first place, the individuals controlling it had again and again shown that they had no conception of the meaning of good faith. They were literally "incapable of a covenanted peace." "The word of the present rulers of Germany" could not be accepted "as a guarantee of anything that is to endure." But the obstacle to a secure peace seemed to the President to lie even more in the nature of the system than in the character of these individuals. "A steadfast concert for peace," he contended in a famous passage of the Second of April Speech, "can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or to observe its covenants . . . Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own."

It was thus indirectly—though not on that account less essentially—that the overthrow of autocracy became one of the objects of the War. And it was also, as the President viewed it, an object to be attained only indirectly. Since we desired this consummation, yet were unwilling to achieve it by imposing a form of government upon the Germans by force of arms, all

that we and our Allies could legitimately do was to call upon the German people to choose which of two futures they preferred. They could, if they wished, cling to their old leaders and to their autocratic system. But if they did so, they must plainly understand that the peace treaty to be made with them must be guaranteed, not by the word of their rulers, but by their absolute and lasting powerlessness to break it; and they must likewise understand that, so long as they chose "to live under ambitious and intriguing masters whom the other peoples of the world could not trust, it might be impossible to admit them to the partnership of nations which must henceforth guarantee the world's peace, . . . or to the free economic intercourse which must inevitably spring out of the other partnerships of a real peace." To force the German people to face this alternative, and to make its own option—this from the beginning has clearly been one of the foremost objects of President Wilson's diplomacy. To make it certain that the Germans would choose the right alternative, the defeat of their military power was—as the President never failed to recognize—absolutely necessary. But it is at least questionable whether a military defeat would have been sufficient to assure that choice, if it had not been accompanied by Mr. Wilson's constant pressing home upon the German mind of the inevitability of this option.

5. Yet the four great results already mentioned are, after all, no more than necessary preliminaries to the accomplishment of America's chief purpose in the War. They do not, of themselves, fulfil that purpose; for they afford no permanent assurance against future acts of violence and injustice by one nation against another. They set up no organized and lasting Community of Nations in which are realized those conditions

which we have seen to be indispensable for a sane and secure community of individuals. And, from the American point of view—which is but the point of view of all humane and reasonable men—the war will have been a tragic failure unless through it “some common force shall be brought into existence which shall safeguard right as the first and most fundamental interest of all peoples and all governments,” and shall “summon coercion, not to the service of political ambition or selfish hostility, but to the service of a common order, a common justice, and a common peace.” Even before the United States had entered the struggle, President Wilson had declared that civilization “can not claim to be finally established” until “the great nations of the world have reached some sort of agreement as to what they hold to be fundamental in their common interest, and as to some feasible method of action in concert when any nation or group of nations seeks to disturb those fundamental things.” And it was to make the world thus, at last, a civilized world that America finally took up arms. The same theme has constantly recurred in the President’s most important utterances on our war aims. “This war,” he pointed out (February 11, 1918), “had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claim to determine their own allegiances and their own forms of political life. Covenants must now be entered into which will render such things impossible for the future; and those covenants must be backed by the united force of all the nations that love justice and are willing to maintain it at any cost.”

It is true that the organization of a workable and enduring League of Nations to enforce peace and maintain international justice is a problem which, in its

details, offers many and serious difficulties. But to believe that those difficulties cannot be solved is to believe that mankind, even after the fearful teaching of the past four—or rather, of the past fifty—years, is a race so besotted in folly that it cannot unite even to save itself and its dearest interests from the ruin which has once already almost befallen them. Few Americans are ready to think so despairingly of human nature.

It will be seen that the purpose of establishing a League of Nations, though it does not conflict with the purpose of liberating the oppressed nations of Europe, nevertheless modifies and counterbalances it. We have fought to set those nations free, and in doing so have incidentally disunited more than one existing state or federation of states; but we have not fought to make mankind as a whole more disunited than before, nor to set up new walls of separation between neighbor-peoples. It would manifestly be not a realization but a defeat of our purpose if the war were to result, in Eastern Europe or elsewhere, in the growth of fresh national rivalries and animosities, or in the development among other peoples of that spirit of national selfishness and truculence which has brought ruin to Prussia and disaster to all the world. Especially do we hope and expect that the nations which have newly won their independence will, from the beginning of the splendid history which we hope awaits them, be mindful also of the interdependence of nations, and will be conspicuous champions of those ideals of international good will and cooperation by which their own national existence has been made possible.

From all this it is evident how truly the objects for the sake of which America has been fighting still wait, for their full accomplishment, upon tasks yet to be

performed. But for what still remains to be done we can legitimately gain courage and confidence by remembering how much we have learned and how far we have gone in the little space of two years, and how much finer and greater than we had guessed is the destiny and opportunity of the Republic, as these years have revealed it to us. For upon all the past history of America, upon all the labors and struggles of those who have gone before us, the present moment casts a new and splendid light. As President Wilson wrote, in proclaiming a national holiday on the anniversary of the discovery of the New World, "we now know more certainly than we ever knew before why free men brought the great nation and government we love into existence, because it grows clearer and clearer what supreme service it is to be America's privilege to render to the world." We have, indeed, at last discovered that the Western Continent was not to be a mere receptacle for the overflow of Europe's population, nor even a mere haven of refuge from ancient oppressions, made safe by its remoteness. It was, in the fullness of time, to assume its due share in the task of keeping the whole world safe—to have its part, an indispensable part, in redeeming the Mother Continent from the menace of a new and peculiarly sinister oppression, and in helping, in very truth, "to proclaim liberty throughout the world." America's sons, sprung from every race and breed in Europe and inheriting all that the older lands have wrought for the enrichment of human life, have, through these crowded months of 1918, poured across the Atlantic, a huge returning tide of youth, to the shores from which their fathers came; and in the work which it was given them to do we see how, in a larger sense than we had supposed, America was the hope of the world.

Yet we Americans have no reason to assume any grand airs of unselfishness or generosity. We have done what it would have been ignominy, at such a crisis, not to do; and we have always realized that, in President Wilson's words, "we are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind," and that we were not the earliest to enter the lists in that cause. Our French and British and Italian allies, as we can never forget, have paid an immensely greater part than we of the price of victory. And if any distinction in honor were to be made amongst the peoples which have together saved civilization from a supreme disaster, we and all our greater Allies know well to which country the first place must be given: it is to the little nation which—not after long hesitation, but in a moment, and as a thing of course—accepted with open eyes the prospect, not merely of sacrifice, but of absolute ruin, rather than violate its pledged word and become a partner in an act of treachery against a neighbor-people. By that decision Belgium made itself for all time the symbol and the chief representative of the ideal of international obligation and national faith; and by its hopeless but heroically prolonged resistance to the field-gray hordes that swept across its soil, it saved the cause of freedom and of international right at the moment of its most desperate peril. The action of Belgium in August, 1914, was a challenge to the honor of every nation in the world. It was unthinkable that America would not, sooner or later, meet that challenge. We had long since been far too deeply committed to the same principles, not to be ready to dedicate all we had to maintaining them, so soon as we clearly realized how absolutely their future influence in the world's affairs depended upon our making common cause with all their other defenders. And now that America has thus

"joined the world," and the free peoples of both continents have been united in a vast fellowship of sacrifice for the sake of the generations that are to come after, it is unthinkable that the old isolation and estrangement can ever come back again. We are under the most sacred obligation to continue to work together loyally in peace to complete the task in which so many of our brothers, among all these peoples, have laid down their lives together.

November, 1918.

A. O. Lovejoy.

## I. NATIONS MUST KEEP THEIR CONTRACTS

(Address to Congress, March 5, 1914)

[This address may seem at first to have little to do with the war. In reality it is the most appropriate preamble to the President's speeches on the war aims of America. Here, five months before Germany invaded Belgium, Mr. Wilson assumed as evident these principles: that nations are bound by the same code of honor which self-respecting men observe in their dealings with one another; that a nation must therefore carry out the promises which it has made, even though it be to its own hurt; and that the fact that a country is great and powerful is not a reason for disregarding the claims and rights of other countries, but rather a reason for a more scrupulous regard for those rights and a more generous recognition of those claims. And it was to America that these principles were then applied. Three years before President Wilson demanded that Germany should "observe the same standards of conduct that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states," he was demanding that our own country should do this, even if our material interests might seem to some to suffer thereby. Congress accepted the same view and took action accordingly.

The facts necessary for an understanding of the address are briefly these: The Panama Canal had just been completed. An act passed by Congress granted passage of the canal to American coastwise ships free of tolls. But there existed a treaty with Great Britain which many

*American, and probably most foreign, authorities interpreted as providing that, when the canal should be built, no preferential treatment should be given to American vessels. It was to call attention to this treaty-obligation that the President appeared before a joint session of Congress on March 5, 1914.]*

#### GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

I have come to you upon an errand which can be very briefly performed, but I beg that you will not measure its importance by the number of sentences in which I state it. No communication I have addressed to the Congress carried with it graver or more far-reaching implications as to the interest of the country, and I come now to speak upon a matter with regard to which I am charged in a peculiar degree, by the Constitution itself, with personal responsibility.

I have come to ask you for the repeal of that provision of the Panama Canal Act of August 24, 1912, which exempts vessels engaged in the coastwise trade of the United States from payment of tolls, and to urge upon you the justice, the wisdom, and the large policy of such a repeal with the utmost earnestness of which I am capable.

In my own judgment, very fully considered and maturely formed, that exemption constitutes a mistaken economic policy from every point of view, and is, moreover, in plain contravention of the treaty with Great Britain concerning the canal concluded on November 18, 1901. But I have not come to urge upon you my personal views. I have come to state to you a fact and a situation. Whatever may be our own differ-

ences of opinion concerning this much debated measure, its meaning is not debated outside the United States. Everywhere else the language of the treaty is given but one interpretation, and that interpretation precludes the exemption I am asking you to repeal. We consented to the treaty; its language we accepted, if we did not originate it; and we are too big, too powerful, too self-respecting a nation to interpret with a too strained or refined reading the words of our own promises just because we have power enough to give us leave to read them as we please. The large thing to do is the only thing we can afford to do, a voluntary withdrawal from a position everywhere questioned and misunderstood. We ought to reverse our action without raising the question whether we were right or wrong, and so once more deserve our reputation for generosity and for the redemption of every obligation without quibble or hesitation.

I ask this of you in support of the foreign policy of the administration. I shall not know how to deal with other matters of even greater delicacy and nearer consequence if you do not grant it to me in ungrudging measure.

## II. NEUTRALS HAVE RIGHTS

(First Note to Germany on the Sinking of the  
“Lusitania,” May 13, 1915.)

[On May 7, 1915, the Cunard steamship “Lusitania,” bound to England from New York, was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, and sank almost immediately, causing the loss of more than 1,000 lives. Among the victims were 138 Americans. The most important passages of President Wilson’s note of protest to the German Government follow.]

The Government of the United States has been apprised that the Imperial German Government considered themselves to be obliged by the extraordinary circumstances of the present war and the measures adopted by their adversaries in seeking to cut Germany off from all commerce, to adopt methods of retaliation which go much beyond the ordinary methods of warfare at sea, in the proclamation of a war zone from which they have warned neutral ships to keep away. This Government has already taken occasion to inform the Imperial German Government that it cannot admit the adoption of such measures or such a warning of danger to operate as in any degree an abbreviation of the rights of American shipmasters or of American citizens bound on lawful errands as passengers on merchant ships of belligerent nationality; and that it must hold the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability for any infringement of those rights, intentional or incidental. It does not understand the

Imperial German Government to question those rights. It assumes, on the contrary, that the Imperial Government accept, as of course, the rule that the lives of noncombatants, whether they be of neutral citizenship or citizens of one of the nations at war, cannot lawfully or rightfully be put in jeopardy by the capture or destruction of an unarmed merchantman, and recognize also, as all other nations do, the obligation to take the usual precaution of visit and search to ascertain whether a suspected merchantman is in fact of belligerent nationality or is in fact carrying contraband of war under a neutral flag. . . .

American citizens act within their indisputable rights in taking their ships and in traveling wherever their legitimate business calls them upon the high seas, and exercise those rights in what should be the well-justified confidence that their lives will not be endangered by acts done in clear violation of universally acknowledged international obligations, and certainly in the confidence that their own Government will sustain them in the exercise of their rights. . . .

The Government and the people of the United States look to the Imperial German Government for just, prompt, and enlightened action in this vital matter with the greater confidence because the United States and Germany are bound together not only by special ties of friendship but also by the explicit stipulations of the treaty of 1828 between the United States and the Kingdom of Prussia.

Expressions of regret and offers of reparation in case of the destruction of neutral ships sunk by mistake, while they may satisfy international obligations, if no

loss of life results, cannot justify or excuse a practice, the natural and necessary effect of which is to subject neutral nations and neutral persons to new and immeasurable risks.

The Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment.

### III. NO ABATEMENT OF RIGHT CAN BE ACCEPTED

(Letter to Senator Stone, February 24, 1916.)

[During the last week of February, 1916, there were introduced in both houses of Congress resolutions calling upon citizens of the United States "to forbear to exercise the right to travel as passengers on any armed vessel of any belligerent power, whether such vessel be armed for offensive or defensive purposes." On February 24, Senator W. J. Stone of Missouri, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, addressed an open letter to the President, supporting this resolution and declaring that it would be "so monstrous as to be indefensible" that the United States should be "plunged into the vortex of this world war" in defense of the right of its citizens to travel in safety on the high seas—a right unquestioned under international law. President Wilson replied on the same day in the following terms:]

You are right in assuming that I shall do everything in my power to keep the United States out of war. I think the country will feel no uneasiness about my course in that respect. Through many anxious months I have striven for that object, amidst difficulties more manifold than can have been apparent upon the surface, and so far I have succeeded. I do not doubt that I shall continue to succeed. The course which the Central European Powers have announced their intention of following in the future with regard to undersea warfare seems for the moment to threaten insuperable ob-

stacles, but its apparent meaning is so manifestly inconsistent with explicit assurances recently given us by those Powers with regard to their treatment of the merchant vessels on the high seas that I must believe that explanations will presently ensue which will put a different aspect upon it. We have had no reason to question their good faith or their fidelity to their promises in the past, and I for one feel confident that we shall have none in the future.

But in any event our duty is clear. No nation, no group of nations, has the right while war is in progress to alter or disregard the principles which all nations have agreed upon in mitigation of the horrors and sufferings of war; and if the clear rights of American citizens should ever unhappily be abridged or denied by any such action we should, it seems to me, have in honor no choice as to what our own course should be.

For my own part, I cannot consent to any abridgment of the rights of American citizens in any respect. The honor and self-respect of the nation are involved. We covet peace, and shall preserve it at any cost but the loss of honor. To forbid our people to exercise their rights for fear we might be called upon to vindicate them would be a deep humiliation indeed. It would be an implicit, all but an explicit, acquiescence in the violation of the rights of mankind everywhere, and of whatever nation or allegiance. It would be a deliberate abdication of our hitherto proud position as spokesman, even amidst the turmoil of war, for the law and the right. It would make everything this Government has attempted, and everything that it has achieved during this terrible struggle of nations, meaningless and futile.

It is important to reflect that if in this instance we allow expediency to take the place of principle, the door would inevitably be opened to still further concessions. Once accept a single abatement of right, and many other humiliations would certainly follow, and the whole fine fabric of international law might crumble under our hands piece by piece. What we are contending for in this matter is of the very essence of the things that have made America a sovereign nation. She cannot yield them without conceding her own impotency as a nation, and making a virtual surrender of her independent position among the nations of the world.

## IV. A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(Address Before the League to Enforce Peace,  
Washington, May 27, 1916.)

[*The organization known as The League to Enforce Peace was formed at a meeting held on June 16, 1915, in Independence Hall, Philadelphia. It was felt by the organizers of the society that there could be no other place so suitable for a "meeting called to frame a Declaration of Interdependence of the Nations."* The League favors (1) the maintenance of international courts to which shall be submitted for hearing and judgment all international disputes involving questions of law or treaties; (2) the establishment of international councils of conciliation, to which all other disputes between nations shall be submitted for consideration and recommendation; (3) the formation of a League of Nations, all the nations belonging to which shall bind themselves to cut off commercial intercourse with any member-nation that threatens war against another member without having first submitted its dispute for conciliation or judicial hearing; and to use their joint military forces against any member-nation that actually goes to war against another nation belonging to the League without first submitting its case to the international court or committee of conciliation and awaiting its decision or recommendation.

*In the address of which the greater part is here given, President Wilson, nearly a year before America entered the War, made clear his acceptance of the third of these principles, by which the League is distinguished from*

*most other peace societies—the principle that “coercion” must be summoned to the service of peace; and he declared it to be the duty of the United States, after the war, to become a member of “any feasible association of nations” which might be formed for this purpose. This declaration was a very important step towards the final abandonment of the tradition of American isolation.*

*After our entrance into the war the President frequently returned to this subject, especially in his speech of January 8, 1918 (No. XI), and at the opening of the Third Liberty Loan (No. XIII).]*

This Great War that broke so suddenly upon the world two years ago, and which has swept within its flame so great a part of the civilized world, has affected us very profoundly, and we are not only at liberty, it is perhaps our duty, to speak very frankly of it and of the great interests of civilization which it affects.

With its causes and its objects we are not concerned. The obscure fountains from which its stupendous flood has burst forth we are not interested to search for or explore. But so great a flood, spread far and wide to every quarter of the globe, has of necessity engulfed many a fair province of right that lies very near to us. Our own rights as a nation, the liberties, the privileges, and the property of our people have been profoundly affected. We are not mere disconnected lookers-on. The longer the war lasts, the more deeply do we become concerned that it should be brought to an end and the world be permitted to resume its normal life and course again. And when it does come to an end we shall be as much concerned as the nations at war to see peace

assume an aspect of permanence, give promise of days from which the anxiety of uncertainty shall be lifted, bring some assurance that peace and war shall always hereafter be reckoned part of the common interest of mankind. *We are participants, whether we would or not, in the life of the world. The interests of all nations are our own also. We are partners with the rest. What affects mankind is inevitably our affair as well as the affair of the nations of Europe and of Asia.*

One observation on the causes of the present War we are at liberty to make, and to make it may throw some light forward upon the future, as well as backward upon the past. It is plain that this war could have come only as it did, suddenly and out of secret counsels, without warning to the world, without discussion, without any of the deliberate movements of counsel with which it would seem natural to approach so stupendous a contest. It is probable that if it had been foreseen just what would happen, just what alliances would be formed, just what forces arrayed against one another, those who brought the great contest on would have been glad to substitute conference for force. If we ourselves had been afforded some opportunity to apprise the belligerents of the attitude which it would be our duty to take, of the policies and practices against which we would feel bound to use all our moral and economic strength, and in certain circumstances even our physical strength also, our own contribution to the counsel which might have averted the struggle would have been considered worth weighing and regarding.

And the lesson which the shock of being taken by surprise in a matter so deeply vital to all the nations of

the world has made poignantly clear is, that the peace of the world must henceforth depend upon a new and more wholesome diplomacy. *Only when the great nations of the world have reached some sort of agreement as to what they hold to be fundamental to their common interest, and as to some feasible method of acting in concert when any nation or group of nations seeks to disturb those fundamental things, can we feel that civilization is at last in a way of justifying its existence and claiming to be finally established.* It is clear that nations must in the future be governed by the same high code of honor that we demand of individuals.

We must, indeed, in the very same breath with which we avow this conviction admit that we have ourselves upon occasion in the past been offenders against the law of diplomacy which we thus forecast; but our conviction is not the less clear, but rather the more clear, on that account. *If this war has accomplished nothing else for the benefit of the world, it has at least disclosed a great moral necessity and set forward the thinking of the statesmen of the world by a whole age.* Repeated utterances of the leading statesmen of most of the great nations now engaged in war have made it plain that their thought has come to this, that the principle of public right must henceforth take precedence over the individual interests of particular nations, and that the nations of the world must in some way band themselves together to see that that right prevails as against any sort of selfish aggression; that henceforth alliance must not be set up against alliance, understanding against understanding, but that there must be a common agreement for a common object, and that at the heart of that common object must lie the

*inviolable rights of peoples and of mankind. The nations of the world have become each other's neighbors. It is to their interest that they should understand each other. In order that they may understand each other, it is imperative that they should agree to cooperate in a common cause, and that they should so act that the guiding principle of that common cause shall be even-handed and impartial justice.*

This is undoubtedly the thought of America. This is what we ourselves will say when there comes proper occasion to say it. In the dealings of nations with one another arbitrary force must be rejected and we must move forward to the thought of the modern world, the thought of which peace is the very atmosphere. That thought constitutes a chief part of the passionate conviction of America.

We believe these fundamental things: First, that every people has a right to choose the sovereignty under which it shall live. Like other nations, we have ourselves no doubt once and again offended against that principle when for a little while controlled by selfish passion, as our franker historians have been honorable enough to admit; but it has become more and more our rule of life and action. Second, that the small states of the world have a right to enjoy the same respect for their sovereignty and for their territorial integrity that great and powerful nations expect and insist upon. And, third, that the world has a right to be free from every disturbance of its peace that has its origin in aggression and disregard of the rights of peoples and nations.

So sincerely do we believe in these things that I am sure that I speak the mind and wish of the people of

America when I say that the United States is willing to become a partner in any feasible association of nations formed in order to realize these objects and make them secure against violation.

There is nothing that the United States wants for itself that any other nation has. We are willing, on the contrary, to limit ourselves along with them to a prescribed course of duty and respect for the rights of others which will check any selfish passion of our own, as it will check any aggressive impulse of theirs . . .

I did not come here, let me repeat, to discuss a program. *I came only to avow a creed and give expression to the confidence I feel that the world is even now upon the eve of a great consummation, when some common force will be brought into existence which shall safeguard right as the first and most fundamental interest of all peoples and all governments, when coercion shall be summoned not to the service of political ambition or selfish hostility, but to the service of a common order, a common justice, and a common peace. God grant that the dawn of that day of frank dealing and of settled peace, concord, and cooperation may be near at hand!*

## V. THE REASONS FOR AMERICA'S ENTRANCE INTO THE WAR

(Address to Congress advising that Germany's Course Be Declared War Against the United States. Delivered in Joint Session, April 2, 1917.)

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the third of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the first day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the War, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a

fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning, and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded. This minimum of right the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had

no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

*It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.*

When I addressed the Congress on the twenty-sixth of February last I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our

people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual; it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the War without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. *There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.*

*With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical*

*character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.*

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany, and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the navy in all respects, but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war of at least five hundred thousand men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and

can be handled in training. It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the Government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well conceived taxation.

I say sustained so far as may be equitable by taxation because it seems to me that it would be most unwise to base the credits which will now be necessary entirely on money borrowed. It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people so far as we may against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

In carrying out the measures by which these things are to be accomplished we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our own military forces with the duty,—for it will be a very practical duty,—of supplying the nations already at war with Germany with the materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. They are in the field and we should help them in every way to be effective there.

I shall take the liberty of suggesting, through the several executive departments of the Government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned. I hope that it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the Government upon which the responsibility of conducting the war and safeguarding the nation will most directly fall.

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world what our motives and our objects are. My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the nation has been altered or clouded by them. I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the twenty-second of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed the Congress on the third of February and on the twenty-sixth of February. *Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles.* *Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples; and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people.* We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this War. It was not

with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

*A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.*

Does not every American feel that assurance has been

added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew her best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude towards life. The autocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose; and now it has been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added in all their naive majesty and might to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a League of Honor.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce. Indeed it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began; and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture but a fact proved in our courts of justice that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of

the United States. Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them, because we knew that their source lay, not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people towards us (who were, no doubt, as ignorant of them as we ourselves were), but only in the selfish designs of a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing. But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted note to the German Minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. *We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretence about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of*

*political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.*

Just because we fight without rancor and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.

I have said nothing of the governments allied with the Imperial Government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honor. The Austro-Hungarian Government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified endorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German Government, and it has therefore not been possible for this Government to receive Count Tarnowski, the Ambassador recently accredited to this Government by the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary; but that Government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights.

It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity towards a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck. We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as the early re-establishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us,—however hard it may be for them, for the time being, to believe that this is spoken from our hearts. We have borne with their present government through all these bitter months because of that friendship,—exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible. We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards the millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live amongst us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it towards all who are in fact loyal to their neighbors and to the Government in the hour of test. They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, Gentlemen of

the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. *There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us.* It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

## VI. WHY AMERICA WAS KEPT UNITED

(Address to Confederate Veterans, at their Twenty-seventh Annual Convention, Washington, D. C., June 5, 1917.)

MR. COMMANDER, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I esteem it a very great pleasure and a real privilege to extend to the men who are attending this reunion the very cordial greetings of the Government of the United States.

I suppose that as you mix with one another you chiefly find these to be days of memory, when your thoughts go back and recall those days of struggle in which your hearts were strained, in which the whole nation seemed in grapple, and I dare say that you are thrilled as you remember the heroic things that were then done. You are glad to remember that heroic things were done on both sides, and that men in those days fought in something like the old spirit of chivalric gallantry. There are many memories of the Civil War that thrill along the blood and make one proud to have been sprung of a race that could produce such bravery and constancy; and yet the world does not live on memories. The world is constantly making its toilsome way forward into new and different days, and I believe that one of the things that contributes satisfaction to a reunion like this and a welcome like this is that this is a day of oblivion. There are some things that we have thankfully buried, and among them are the great passions of division which once threatened to rend this nation in

twain. The passion of admiration we still entertain for the heroic figures of those old days, but the passion of separation, the passion of difference of principle, is gone—gone out of our minds, gone out of our hearts; and one of the things that will thrill this country as it reads of this reunion is that it will read also of a re-dedication on the part of all of us to the great nation which we serve in common.

These are days of oblivion as well as of memory; for we are forgetting the things that once held us asunder. Not only that, but they are days of rejoicing, because we now at last see why this great nation was kept united; for we are beginning to see the great world purposes which it was meant to serve. Many men, I know, particularly of your own generation, have wondered at some of the dealings of Providence, but the wise heart never questions the dealings of Providence, because the great, long plan as it unfolds has a majesty about it and a definiteness of purpose, an elevation of ideal, which we were incapable of conceiving as we tried to work things out with our own short sight and weak strength. And now that we see ourselves part of a nation united, powerful, great in spirit and in purpose, we know the great ends which God, in His mysterious providence, wrought through our instrumentality, because at the heart of the men of the North and of the South there was the same love of self-government and of liberty, and now we are to be an instrument in the hands of God to see that liberty is made secure for mankind. . . .

As I came along the streets a few minutes ago my heart was full of the thought that this is Registration

Day. Will you not support me in feeling that there is some significance in this coincidence, that this day, when I come to welcome you to the national capital, is a day when men young as you were in those old days, when you gathered together to fight, are now registering their names as evidence of this great idea, that in a democracy the duty to serve and the privilege to serve falls upon all alike? There is something very fine, my fellow-citizens, in the spirit of the volunteer, but deeper than the volunteer spirit is the spirit of obligation. There is not a man of us who must not hold himself ready to be summoned to the duty of supporting the great Government under which we live. No really thoughtful and patriotic man is jealous of that obligation. No man who really understands the privilege and the dignity of being an American citizen quarrels for a moment with the idea that the Congress of the United States has the right to call upon whom it will to serve the nation. These solemn lines of young men going to-day all over the Union to places of registration ought to be a signal to the world, to those who dare flout the dignity and honor and rights of the United States, that all her manhood will flock to that standard under which we all delight to serve, and that he who challenges the rights and principles of the United States challenges the united strength and devotion of a nation.

There are not many things that one desires about war, my fellow-citizens, but you have come through war, you know how you have been chastened by it, and there comes a time when it is good for a nation to know that it must sacrifice if need be everything that it has to vindicate the principles which it professes. We have pros

pered with a sort of heedless and irresponsible prosperity. Now we are going to lay all our wealth, if necessary, and spend all our blood, if need be, to show that we were not accumulating that wealth selfishly, but were accumulating it for the service of mankind. Men all over the world have thought of the United States as a trading and money-getting people, whereas we who have lived at home know the ideals with which the hearts of this people have thrilled; we know the sober convictions which have lain at the basis of our life all the time, and we know the power and devotion which can be spent in heroic ways for the service of those ideals that we have treasured. We have been allowed to become strong in the Providence of God that our strength might be used to prove, not our selfishness, but our greatness, and if there is any ground for thankfulness in a day like this, I am thankful for the privilege of self-sacrifice, which is the only privilege that lends dignity to the human spirit. . . .

## VII. FLAG DAY ADDRESS

(Delivered at Washington, D. C., June 14, 1917.)

MY FELLOW CITIZENS:

We meet to celebrate Flag Day because this flag which we honor and under which we serve is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours. It floats in majestic silence above the hosts that execute those choices, whether in peace or in war. And yet, though silent, it speaks to us—speaks to us of the past, of the men and women who went before us and of the records they wrote upon it. We celebrate the day of its birth; and from its birth until now it has witnessed a great history, has floated on high the symbol of great events, of a great plan of life worked out by a great people. We are about to carry it into battle, to lift it where it will draw the fire of our enemies. We are about to bid thousands, hundreds of thousands, it may be millions, of our men, the young, the strong, the capable men of the nation, to go forth and die beneath it on fields of blood far away—for what? For some unaccustomed thing? For something for which it has never sought the fire before? American armies were never before sent across the seas. Why are they sent now? For some new purpose, for which this great flag has never been carried before, or for some old, familiar, heroic purpose for which it has seen men, its own men,

die on every battlefield upon which Americans have borne arms since the Revolution?

These are questions which must be answered. We are Americans. We in our turn serve America, and can serve her with no private purpose. We must use her flag as she has always used it. We are accountable at the bar of history and must plead in utter frankness what purpose it is we seek to serve.

It is plain enough how we were forced into the war. The extraordinary insults and aggressions of the Imperial German Government left us no self-respecting choice but to take up arms in defense of our rights as a free people and of our honor as a sovereign government. The military masters of Germany denied us the right to be neutral. They filled our unsuspecting communities with vicious spies and conspirators and sought to corrupt the opinion of our people in their own behalf. When they found that they could not do that, their agents diligently spread sedition amongst us and sought to draw our own citizens from their allegiance—and some of those agents were men connected with the official Embassy of the Germany Government itself here in our own capital. They sought by violence to destroy our industries and arrest our commerce. They tried to incite Mexico to take up arms against us and to draw Japan into a hostile alliance with her—and that, not by indirection, but by direct suggestion from the Foreign Office in Berlin. They impudently denied us the use of the high seas and repeatedly executed their threat that they would send to their death any of our people who ventured to approach the coasts of Europe. And many of our own people were corrupted. Men

began to look upon their own neighbors with suspicion and to wonder in their hot resentment and surprise whether there was any community in which hostile intrigue did not lurk. What great nation in such circumstances would not have taken up arms? Much as we had desired peace, it was denied us, and not of our own choice. This flag under which we serve would have been dishonored had we withheld our hand.

But that is only part of the story. We know now as clearly as we knew before we were ourselves engaged that we are not the enemies of the German people and that they are not our enemies. They did not originate or desire this hideous war or wish that we should be drawn into it; and we are vaguely conscious that we are fighting their cause, as they will some day see it, as well as our own. They are themselves in the grip of the same sinister power that has now at last stretched its ugly talons out and drawn blood from us. The whole world is at war because the whole world is in the grip of that power and is trying out the great battle which shall determine whether it is to be brought under its mastery or fling itself free.

The war was begun by the military masters of Germany, who proved to be also the masters of Austria-Hungary. These men have never regarded nations as peoples, men, women, and children of like blood and frame as themselves, for whom governments existed and in whom governments had their life. They have regarded them merely as serviceable organizations which they could by force or intrigue bend or corrupt to their own purpose. They have regarded the smaller states, in particular, and the peoples who could be over-

whelmed by force, as their natural tools and instruments of domination. Their purpose has long been avowed. The statesmen of other nations, to whom that purpose was incredible, paid little attention; regarded what German professors expounded in their classrooms and German writers set forth to the world as the goal of German policy as rather the dream of minds detached from practical affairs, as preposterous private conceptions of German destiny, than as the actual plans of responsible rulers; but the rulers of Germany themselves knew all the while what concrete plans, what well advanced intrigues lay back of what the professors and the writers were saying, and were glad to go forward unmolested, filling the thrones of Balkan states with German princes, putting German officers at the service of Turkey to drill her armies and make interest with her government, developing plans of sedition and rebellion in India and Egypt, setting their fires in Persia. The demands made by Austria upon Servia were a mere single step in a plan which compassed Europe and Asia, from Berlin to Bagdad. They hoped those demands might not arouse Europe, but they meant to press them whether they did or not, for they thought themselves ready for the final issue of arms.

The military masters under whom Germany is bleeding see very clearly to what point Fate has brought them. If they fall back or are forced back an inch, their power both abroad and at home will fall to pieces like a house of cards. It is their power at home they are thinking about now more than their power abroad. It is that power which is trembling under their very feet; and deep fear has entered their hearts. They have

but one chance to perpetuate their military power or even their controlling political influence. If they can secure peace now with the immense advantages still in their hands which they have up to this point apparently gained, they will have justified themselves before the German people; they will have gained by force what they promised to gain by it: an immense expansion of German power, an immense enlargement of German industrial and commercial opportunities. Their prestige will be secure, and with their prestige their political power. If they fail, their people will thrust them aside; a government accountable to the people themselves will be set up in Germany as it has been in England, in the United States, in France, and in all the great countries of the modern time except Germany. If they succeed they are safe and Germany and the world are undone; if they fail Germany is saved and the world will be at peace. If they succeed, America will fall within the menace. We and all the rest of the world must remain armed, as they will remain, and must make ready for the next step in their aggression; if they fail, the world may unite for peace and Germany may be of the union.

Do you not now understand the new intrigue, the intrigue for peace, and why the masters of Germany do not hesitate to use any agency that promises to effect their purpose, the deceit of the nations? Their present particular aim is to deceive all those who throughout the world stand for the rights of peoples and the self-government of nations; for they see what immense strength the forces of justice and of liberalism are gathering out of this war. They are employing liberals

in their enterprise. They are using men, in Germany and without, as their spokesmen whom they have hitherto despised and oppressed, using them for their own destruction—socialists, the leaders of labor, the thinkers they have hitherto sought to silence. Let them once succeed and these men, now their tools, will be ground to powder beneath the weight of the great military empire they will have set up; the revolutionists in Russia will be cut off from all succor or cooperation in western Europe and a counter revolution fostered and supported; Germany herself will lose her chance of freedom; and all Europe will arm for the next, the final struggle.

The sinister intrigue is being no less actively conducted in this country than in Russia and in every country in Europe to which the agents and dupes of the Imperial German Government can get access. That government has many spokesmen here, in places high and low. They have learned discretion. They keep within the law. It is opinion they utter now, not edition. They proclaim the liberal purposes of their masters; declare this a foreign war which can touch America with no danger to either her lands or her institutions; set England at the center of the stage and talk of her ambition to assert economic dominion throughout the world; appeal to our ancient tradition of isolation in the politics of the nations; and seek to undermine the government with false professions of loyalty to its principles.

But they will make no headway. The false betray themselves always in every accent. It is only friends and partisans of the German Government whom we

have already identified who utter these thinly disguised loyalties. The facts are patent to all the world, and nowhere are they more plainly seen than in the United States, where we are accustomed to deal with facts and not with sophistries; and the great fact that stands out above all the rest is that this is a People's War, a war for freedom and justice and self-government amongst all the nations of the world, a war to make the world safe for the peoples who live upon it and have made it their own, the German peoples themselves included; and that with us rests the choice to break through all these hypocrisies and patent cheats and masks of brute force and help set the world free or else stand aside and let it be dominated a long age through by sheer weight of arms and the arbitrary choices of self-constituted masters, by the nation which can maintain the biggest armies and the most irresistible armaments—a power to which the world has afforded no parallel and in the face of which political freedom must wither and perish.

For us there is but one choice. We have made it. Woe be to the man or group of men that seeks to stand in our way in this day of high resolution when every principle we hold dearest is to be vindicated and made secure for the salvation of the nations. We are ready to plead at the bar of history, and our flag shall wear a new luster. Once more we shall make good with our lives and fortunes the great faith to which we were born, and a new glory shall shine in the face of our people.

## VIII. THE FINAL TEST OF AN AMERICAN

(Passages from an Address before the American Federation of Labor, Buffalo, N. Y., November 12, 1917.)

MR. PRESIDENT, DELEGATES OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I esteem it a great privilege and a real honor to be thus admitted to your public counsels. When your executive committee paid me the compliment of inviting me here, I gladly accepted the invitation because it seems to me that this, above all other times in our history, is the time for common counsel, for the drawing together not only of the energies but of the minds of the Nation. I thought that it was a welcome opportunity for disclosing to you some of the thoughts that have been gathering in my mind during the last momentous months.

I am introduced to you as the President of the United States, and yet I would be pleased if you would put the thought of the office into the background and regard me as one of your fellow-citizens who has come here to speak, not the words of authority, but the words of counsel; the words which men should speak to one another who wish to be frank in a moment more critical perhaps than the history of the world has ever yet known; a moment when it is every man's duty to forget himself, to forget his own interests, to fill himself with the nobility of a great national and world conception, and act upon a new platform elevated above the ordi-

nary affairs of life and lifted to where men have views of the long destiny of mankind. I think that in order to realize just what this moment of counsel is it is very desirable that we should remind ourselves just how this war came about and just what it is for. You can explain most wars very simply, but the explanation of this is not so simple. Its roots run deep into all the obscure soils of history, and in my view this is the last decisive issue between the old principles of power and the new principles of freedom. . . .

May I not say that it is amazing to me that any group of persons should be so ill-informed as to suppose, as some groups in Russia apparently suppose, that any reforms planned in the interest of the people can live in the presence of a Germany powerful enough to undermine or overthrow them by intrigue or force? Any body of free men that compounds with the present German Government is compounding for its own destruction. But that is not the whole of the story. Any man in America or anywhere else that supposes that the free industry and enterprise of the world can continue if the Pan-German plan is achieved and German power fastened upon the world is as fatuous as the dreamers in Russia. What I am opposed to is not the feeling of the pacifists, but their stupidity. My heart is with them, but my mind has a contempt for them. I want peace; but I know how to get it, and they do not.

You will notice that I sent a friend of mine, Colonel House, to Europe, who is as great a lover of peace as any man in the world, but I didn't send him on a peace mission yet. I sent him to take part in a conference as to how the war was to be won, and he knows, as I

know, that that is the way to get peace if you want it for more than a few minutes.

All of this is a preface to the conference that I have referred to with regard to what we are going to do. If we are true friends of freedom of our own or anybody else's, we will see that the power of this country and the productivity of this country is raised to its absolute maximum, and that absolutely nobody is allowed to stand in the way of it. When I say that nobody is allowed to stand in the way I do not mean that they shall be prevented by the power of the Government but by the power of the American spirit. Our duty, if we are to do this great thing and show America to be what we believe her to be—the greatest hope and energy of the world—is to stand together night and day until the job is finished. . . .

*We are all of the same clay and spirit, and we can get together if we desire to get together. Therefore, my counsel to you is this: Let us show ourselves Americans by showing that we do not want to go off in separate camps or groups by ourselves, but that we want to co-operate with all other classes and all other groups in the common enterprise which is to release the spirits of the world from bondage. I would be willing to set that up as the final test of an American. That is the meaning of democracy.* I have been very much distressed, my fellow-citizens, by some of the things that have happened recently. The mob spirit is displaying itself here and there in this country. I have no sympathy with what some men are saying, but I have no sympathy with the men who take their punishment into their own hands; and I want to say to every man who does

join such a mob that I do not recognize him as worthy of the free institutions of the United States. There are some organizations in this country whose object is anarchy and the destruction of law, but I would not meet their efforts by making myself partner in destroying the law. I despise and hate their purposes as much as any man, but I respect the ancient processes of justice; and I would be too proud not to see them done justice, however wrong they are.

*So I want to utter my earnest protest against any manifestation of the spirit of lawlessness anywhere or in any cause. Why, gentlemen, look what it means. We claim to be the greatest democratic people in the world, and democracy means first of all that we can govern ourselves. If our men have not self-control, then they are not capable of that great thing which we call democratic government. A man who takes the law into his own hands is not the right man to cooperate in any formation or development of law and institutions, and some of the processes by which the struggle between capital and labor is carried on are processes that come very near to taking the law into your own hands. I do not mean for a moment to compare it with what I have just been speaking of, but I want you to see that they are mere gradations in this manifestation of the unwillingness to cooperate, and that the fundamental lesson of the whole situation is that we must not only take common counsel, but that we must yield to and obey common counsel. Not all of the instrumentalities for this are at hand. I am hopeful that in the very near future new instrumentalities may be organized by which we can see to it that various things that are now*

going on ought not to go on. There are various processes of the dilution of labor and the unnecessary substitution of labor and the bidding in distant markets and unfairly upsetting the whole competition of labor which ought not to go on. I mean now on the part of employers, and we must interject into this some instrumentality of cooperation by which the fair thing will be done all around. I am hopeful that some such instrumentalities may be devised, but whether they are or not, we must use those that we have and upon every occasion where it is necessary have such an instrumentality originated upon that occasion.

So, my fellow-citizens, the reason I came away from Washington is that I sometimes get lonely down there. There are so many people in Washington who know things that are not so, and there are so few people who know anything about what the people of the United States are thinking about. I have to come away and get reminded of the rest of the country. I have to come away and talk to men who are up against the real thing, and say to them, "I am with you if you are with me." And the only test of being with me is not to think about me personally at all, but merely to think of me as the expression for the time being of the power and dignity and hope of the United States.

## IX. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS STATING THE PEACE TERMS OF THE UNITED STATES

(Delivered in Joint Session, January 8, 1918.)

*[This address marks the passage, in President Wilson's series of utterances concerning the war, from the presentation of the general war-aims of the United States to the formulation of the specific terms of a peace settlement through which those aims may be realized. The address contains the celebrated "Fourteen Points" which, just nine months later, the German Government—its armies then being confronted with the certainty of an overwhelming military disaster—accepted as the basis for peace.*

*The reader should compare President Wilson's "Fourteen Points" with the statement of peace terms of all the European Allies, set forth in Mr. Balfour's despatch of January 16, 1917. "These terms," declared the Allies, "can only be formulated in detail, with all the just compensations and indemnities due for the losses suffered, when the moment for negotiation arrives. But the civilized world knows that they include, primarily and of necessity:*

*The restoration of Belgium, of Serbia, and of Montenegro, with the compensations due to them.*

*The evacuation of the invaded territories in France, Russia, and Rumania, with fitting reparation.*

*The reorganization of Europe, guaranteed by a stable settlement, based alike upon the principle of nationalities, on the right which all peoples, whether small or great, have to the enjoyment of full security and free*

*economic development, and also upon territorial agreements and international arrangements so framed as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjust attacks.*

*The restitution of provinces or territories formerly torn from the Allies by force or contrary to the wishes of their inhabitants.*

*The liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumanians, Czechs, and Slovaks from foreign domination.*

*The liberation of the peoples who now lie beneath the murderous tyranny of the Turks, and the expulsion from Europe of the Ottoman Empire, which has proved itself so radically alien to Western civilization.”*

*It should also be remembered that Mr. Balfour’s note transmitting the above statement of the Allies observed that one of the conditions for a lasting peace must be that “behind international law and behind all treaty arrangements for preventing or limiting hostilities, some form of international sanction should be devised which would give pause to the hardiest aggressor.” It will thus be seen that, in broad outlines and underlying principles, the program laid down by Mr. Wilson in January, 1918, was identical with that promulgated by the European Allies a year previous, and that at least nine of his fourteen conditions were explicitly set forth in the earlier statement, while others were contained in it by implication. For the subsequent action of both the Allied and the German Governments with respect to the “Fourteen Points,” see the note introductory to the last address in this book (No. XIV).]*

#### GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

Once more, as repeatedly before, the spokesmen of the Central Empires have indicated their desire to discuss

the objects of the war and the possible basis of a general peace. Parleys have been in progress at Brest-Litovsk between Russian representatives and representatives of the Central Powers to which the attention of all the belligerents has been invited for the purpose of ascertaining whether it may be possible to extend these parleys into a general conference with regard to terms of peace and settlement. . . .

But, whatever the results of the parleys at Brest-Litovsk, whatever the confusions of counsel and of purpose in the utterances of the spokesmen of the Central Empires, they have again attempted to acquaint the world with their objects in the war and have again challenged their adversaries to say what their objects are and what sort of settlement they would deem just and satisfactory. There is no good reason why that challenge should not be responded to, and responded to with the utmost candor. We did not wait for it. Not once, but again and again, we have laid our whole thought and purpose before the world, not in general terms only, but each time with sufficient definition to make it clear what sort of definite terms of settlement must necessarily spring out of them. Within the last week Mr. Lloyd George has spoken with admirable candor and in admirable spirit for the people and Government of Great Britain.

There is no confusion of counsel among the adversaries of the Central Powers, no uncertainty of principle, no vagueness of detail. The only secrecy of counsel, the only lack of fearless frankness, the only failure to make definite statement of the objects of the war, lies with Germany and her allies. The issues of life and death

hang upon these definitions. No statesman who has the least conception of his responsibility ought for a moment to permit himself to continue this tragical and appalling outpouring of blood and treasure unless he is sure beyond a peradventure that the objects of the vital sacrifice are part and parcel of the very life of Society and that the people for whom he speaks think them right and imperative as he does.

There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many moving voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people. They are prostrate and all but helpless, it would seem, before the grim power of Germany, which has hitherto known no relenting and no pity.. Their power, apparently, is shattered. And yet their soul is not subservient. They will not yield either in principle or in action. Their conception of what is right, of what is humane and honorable for them to accept, has been stated with a frankness, a largeness of view, a generosity of spirit, and a universal human sympathy which must challenge the admiration of every friend of mankind; and they have refused to compound their ideals or desert others that they themselves may be safe.

They call to us to say what it is that we desire, in what, if in anything, our purpose and our spirit differ from theirs; and I believe that the people of the United States would wish me to respond, with utter simplicity and frankness. Whether their present leaders believe it or not, it is our heartfelt desire and hope that some way may be opened whereby we may be privileged to

assist the people of Russia to attain their utmost hope of liberty and ordered peace.

It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they are begun, shall be absolutely open and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world. It is this happy fact, now clear to the view of every public man whose thoughts do not still linger in an age that is dead and gone, which makes it possible for every nation whose purposes are consistent with justice and the peace of the world to avow now or at any other time the objects it has in view.

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once for all against their recurrence.

*What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression.*

*All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us.*

The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our

program; and that program, the only possible program, as we see it, is this:

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and

national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

7. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

11. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

*In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together*

*against the imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.*

*For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this program does remove.*

We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing.

We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world,—the new world in which we now live,—instead of a place of mastery.

Neither do we presume to suggest to her any alteration or modification of her institutions. But it is necessary, we must frankly say, and necessary as a preliminary to any intelligent dealings with her on our part, that we should know whom her spokesmen speak for when they speak to us, whether for the Reichstag majority or for the military party and the men whose creed is imperial domination.

*We have spoken now, surely, in terms too concrete to admit of any further doubt or question. An evident prin-*

ciple runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak.

Unless this principle be made its foundation no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle; and to the vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives, their honor, and everything that they possess. The moral climax of this the culminating and final war for human liberty has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test.

## X. THE WAR TO COMPLETE THE WORK BEGUN BY WASHINGTON AND HIS ASSOCIATES

(Address at the Tomb of Washington, July 4, 1918.)

GENTLEMEN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND MY FELLOW CITIZENS:

I am happy to draw apart with you to this quiet place of old counsel in order to speak a little of the meaning of this day of our nation's independence. The place seems very still and remote. It is as serene and untouched by the hurry of the world as it was in those great days long ago when General Washington was here and held leisurely conference with the men who were to be associated with him in the creation of a nation.

From these gentle slopes they looked out upon the world and saw it whole, saw it with the light of the future upon it, saw it with modern eyes that turned away from a past which men of liberated spirits could no longer endure. It is for that reason that we cannot feel even here, in the immediate presence of this sacred tomb, that this is a place of death.

It was a place of achievement. A great promise that was meant for all mankind was here given plan and reality. The associations by which we are here surrounded are the inspiriting associations of that noble death which is only a glorious consummation. From this green hillside we also ought to be able to see with comprehending eyes that world that lies about us, and should conceive anew the purposes that must set men free.

*It is significant—significant of their own character and purpose and of the influences they were setting afoot—that Washington and his associates, like the Barons at Runnymede, spoke and acted not for a class, but a people. It has been left for us to see to it that it shall be understood that they spoke and acted not for a single people only, but for all mankind. They were thinking not of themselves, but of a people which wished to be done with classes and special interests and the authority of men whom they had not themselves chosen to rule over them.*

They were consciously planning that men of every class should be free, and America a place to which men out of every nation might resort who wished to share with them the rights and privileges of free men. And we take our cue from them, do we not? We intend what they intended.

*We here in America believe our participation in this present war to be only the fruitage of what they planted. Our case differs from theirs only in this, that it is our inestimable privilege to concert with men out of every nation what shall make not only the liberties of America secure, but the liberties of every other people as well.*

There must now be settled, once for all, what was settled for America in the great age upon whose inspiration we draw today. This is surely a fitting place from which calmly to look out upon our task. And this is the appropriate place from which to avow, alike to the friends who look on and to the friends with whom we have the happiness to be associated in action, the faith and purpose with which we act. This, then, is our conception of the great struggle in which we are engaged.

The plot is written plain upon every scene and every

act of the supreme tragedy. On the one hand stand the peoples of the world—not only the peoples actually engaged, but many others also who suffer under mastery but cannot act; peoples of many races and in every part of the world—the people of stricken Russia still among the rest, though they are for the moment unorganized and helpless.

Opposed to them, masters of many armies, stands an isolated friendless group of governments, who speak no common purpose, but only selfish ambitions of their own by which none can profit but themselves, and whose people are fuel in their hands; governments which fear their people and yet are for the time their sovereign lords, making every choice for them and disposing of their lives and fortunes as they will, as well as of the lives and fortunes of every people who fall under their power—governments clothed with the strange trappings and the primitive authority of an age that is altogether alien and hostile to our own.

The past and the present are in deadly grapple, and the peoples of the world are being done to death between them. There can be but one issue.

The settlement must be final. There can be no compromise. No half-way decision would be tolerable. No half-way decision is conceivable.

*These are the ends for which the associated peoples of the world are fighting, and which must be conceded them before there can be peace:*

*First, the destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world, or, if it cannot be*

*presently destroyed, at the least its reduction to virtual impotence.*

*Second, the settlement of every question, whether of territory or sovereignty, of economic arrangement or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.*

*Third, the consent of all nations to be governed in their conduct towards each other by the same principles of honor and of respect for the common law of civilized society that govern the individual citizens of all modern states and in their relations with one another, to the end that all promises and covenants may be sacredly observed, no private plots or conspiracies hatched, no selfish injuries wrought with impunity, and a mutual trust established upon the handsome foundation of a mutual respect for right.*

*Fourth, the establishment of an organization of peace which shall make it certain that the combined power of free nations will check every invasion of right, and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit, and by which every international readjustment that cannot be amicably agreed upon by the peoples directly concerned shall be sanctioned.*

*These great objects can be put into a single sentence—  
What we seek is the reign of law based upon the consent*

*of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind.*

These great ends can be realized only by the determination of what the thinking peoples of the world desire, with their longing hope for justice and for social freedom and opportunity.

I can fancy that the air of this place carries the accents of such principles with a peculiar kindness. Here were started forces which the great nation against which they were primarily directed at first regarded as a revolt against its rightful authority, but which it has long since seen to have been a step in the liberation of its own people as well as of the people of the United States. And I stand here to speak—speak proudly and with confident hope of the spread of this revolt, this liberation, to the great stage of the world itself.

The blinded rulers of Prussia have aroused forces they knew little of, forces which once roused can never be crushed to earth again, for they have at their heart an inspiration and a purpose which are deathless and of the very stuff of triumph.

## XI. THE ISSUES OF THE WAR

(From Speech at the Opening of the Third Liberty Loan Campaign, New York, September 27, 1918.)

At every turn of the war we gain a fresh consciousness of what we mean to accomplish by it. When our hope and expectation are most excited we think more definitely than before of the issues that hang upon it and of the purposes which must be realized by means of it. For it has positive and well-defined purposes which we did not determine and which we cannot alter. No statesman or assembly created them; no statesman or assembly can alter them. They have arisen out of the very nature and circumstances of the war. The most that statesmen or assemblies can do is to carry them out or be false to them. They were perhaps not clear at the outset; but they are clear now. The war has lasted more than four years and the whole world has been drawn into it. The common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual states. Individual statesmen may have started the conflict, but neither they nor their opponents can stop it as they please. It has become a peoples' war, and peoples of all sorts and races, of every degree of power and variety of fortune, are involved in its sweeping processes of change and settlement. We came into it when its character had become fully defined and it was plain that no action could stand apart or be indifferent to its outcome. Its challenge drove to the heart of everything we cared for and lived for. The

voice of the war had become clear and gripped our hearts. Our brothers from many lands, as well as our own murdered dead under the sea, were calling to us, and we responded, fiercely and of course.

The air was clear about us. We saw things in their full, convincing proportions as they were; and we have seen them with steady eyes and unchanging comprehension ever since. We accepted the issues of the war as facts, not as any group of men either here or elsewhere had defined them, and we can accept no outcome which does not squarely meet and settle them. *Those issues are these:*

*Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?*

*Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?*

*Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force or by their own will and choice?*

*Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations, or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?*

*Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance or shall there be a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?*

*No man, no group of men, chose these to be the issues of the struggle. They are the issues of it; and they must be settled—by no arrangement or compromise or adjustment of interests, but definitely and once for all and with a full and unequivocal acceptance of the principle that*

*the interest of the weakest is as sacred as the interest of the strongest.*

This is what we mean when we speak of a permanent peace, if we speak sincerely, intelligently, and with a real knowledge and comprehension of the matter we deal with. . . .

But these general terms do not disclose the whole matter. Some details are needed to make them sound less like a thesis and more like a practical program. These, then, are some of the particulars, and I state them with the greater confidence because I can state them authoritatively as representing this Government's interpretation of its own duty with regard to peace:

1. The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned.

2. No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all.

3. There can be no league or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations.

4. And more specifically, there can be no special, selfish economic combination within the league and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in

the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline and control.

5. All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

Special alliances and economic rivalries and hostilities have been the prolific source in the modern world of the plans and passions that produce war. It would be an insincere as well as an insecure peace that did not exclude them in definite and binding terms. . . .

The confidence with which I venture to speak for our people in these matters does not spring from our traditions merely, and the well-known principles of international action which we have always professed and followed. *In the same sentence in which I say that the United States will enter into no special arrangements or understandings with particular nations let me say also that the United States is prepared to assume its full share of responsibility for the maintenance of the common covenants and understandings upon which peace must henceforth rest. We still read Washington's immortal warning against "entangling alliances" with full comprehension and an answering purpose. But only special and limited alliances entangle; and we recognize and accept the duty of a new day in which we are permitted to hope for a general alliance which will avoid entanglements and clear the air of the world for common understandings and the maintenance of common rights.*

## XII. THE MEANING OF THE VICTORY WON

(Address delivered before Congress in Joint Session on November 11, 1918, announcing the Signing of Terms of Armistice by Representatives of the German Government.)

[On October 5, 1918, the German Government requested the President of the United States "to take in hand the restoration of peace and inform all the belligerent states of this request," and declared its acceptance of "the program set forth by the President in his message to Congress on January 8 and in his later pronouncements, especially his speech on September 27, as a basis for peace negotiations." Before transmitting the German request for an armistice to the Allied Governments, the President demanded further assurances of the German Government that it unequivocally accepted the terms laid down in his address of January 8 and "any subsequent addresses," not as a basis for negotiation, but as actual terms of peace; and that this wish and purpose emanated "not from those who had hitherto dictated German policy and conducted the present war on Germany's behalf, but from Ministers who spoke for the majority of the Reichstag and for an overwhelming majority of the German people." After several diplomatic notes had been interchanged, the President became so far satisfied upon these points that on October 23, he consented "to take up with the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated the question of an armistice." He added, however, that "the only armistice which he would feel

*justified in submitting for consideration would be one which should leave the United States and the powers associated with her in a position to enforce any arrangements that may be entered into and to make a renewal of hostilities on the part of Germany impossible."*

The European Allies, after careful consideration of this correspondence between the American and German Governments, announced on November 5 "their willingness to make peace with the Government of Germany on the terms of peace laid down in the President's address to Congress of January, 1918, and the principles of settlement enunciated in his subsequent addresses." The Allied Governments, however, added to this definite and formal acceptance of President Wilson's peace program one explanatory clause and one reservation. (1) With respect to the seventh and eighth of the "Fourteen Points"—those relating to the evacuation and restoration of invaded territory—the Allies declared that they understood these clauses to mean "that compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea, and from the air." President Wilson at once gave assurance of his agreement with this interpretation of the clauses in question. (2) With respect to the second of the "Fourteen Points," that concerning freedom of navigation of the high seas, the Allies pointed out that "what is usually described as the freedom of the seas is open to various interpretations, some of which they could not accept." They therefore reserved to themselves "complete freedom on this subject when they enter the peace conference." It is important to note that the freedom of the seas "alike in peace and in war," demanded by the

President in his address of January 8 was not at all the kind of freedom which some German writers and officials have claimed; for it was clearly conditioned upon the prior establishment of a League of Nations which should have the power to deny the "freedom of the seas" to nations which violate their covenants—including the covenant by which the League itself should be established. As an English writer has expressed it, the full meaning of President Wilson's clause concerning freedom of navigation, when taken in its context as a part of his entire peace plan, may best be expressed as follows:

"The League of Nations will collectively use the rights of embargo and capture at sea for the enforcement of its covenants against any Power which violates them, but the right to interfere with innocent cargoes at sea is denied to a Power which wages war without the sanction of the League. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas outside territorial waters is assured in peace."

Since both the German and Allied Governments had indicated their willingness to make peace upon the terms outlined in President Wilson's addresses and his notes to the German Government, it only remained to determine the terms of armistice pending the convening of a peace conference. These terms, fixed by Marshal Foch after consultation with the military and naval authorities of the Allied Governments and of the United States, were immediately accepted by Germany. The armistice was signed at 6 o'clock A.M. (Washington time; 11 A.M. French time), November 11, 1918; and at one o'clock P.M. of the same day President Wilson appeared before the two Houses of Congress assembled in Joint Session and delivered the following address.]

## GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

In these times of rapid and stupendous change it will in some degree lighten my sense of responsibility to perform in person the duty of communicating to you some of the larger circumstances of the situation with which it is necessary to deal.

The German authorities, who have at the invitation of the Supreme War Council been in communication with Marshal Foch, have accepted and signed the terms of armistice which he was authorized and instructed to communicate to them.

*Here the President read the terms of the armistice.*

The war thus comes to an end; for having accepted these terms of armistice, it will be impossible for the German command to renew it.

It is not now possible to assess the consequences of this great consummation. We know only that this tragical war, whose consuming flames swept from one nation to another until all the world was on fire, is at an end, and that it was the privilege of our own people to enter it at its most critical juncture in such fashion and in such force as to contribute, in a way of which we are all deeply proud, to the great result.

We know, too, that the object of the war is attained; the object upon which all free men had set their hearts; and attained with a sweeping completeness, which even now we do not realize.

Armed imperialism, such as the men conceived who were but yesterday the masters of Germany, is at an end, its illicit ambitions engulfed in black disaster. Who will now seek to revive it? The arbitrary power of

the military caste of Germany, which once could secretly and of its own single choice disturb the peace of the world, is discredited and destroyed.

*And more than that—much more than that—has been accomplished. The great nations which associated themselves to destroy it have now definitely united in the common purpose to set up such a peace as will satisfy the longing of the whole world for disinterested justice, embodied in settlements which are based upon something much better and more lasting than the selfish competitive interests of powerful states. There is no longer conjecture as to the objects the victors have in mind. They have a mind in the matter, not only, but a heart also. Their avowed and concerted purpose is to satisfy and protect the weak as well as to accord their just rights to the strong.*

The humane temper and intention of the victorious governments have already been manifested in a very practical way. Their representatives in the Supreme War Council at Versailles have by unanimous resolution assured the peoples of the Central Empires that everything that is possible in the circumstances will be done to supply them with food and relieve the distressing want that is in so many places threatening their very lives; and steps are to be taken immediately to organize these efforts at relief in the same systematic manner that they were organized in the case of Belgium.

By the use of the idle tonnage of the Central Empires it ought presently to be possible to lift the fear of utter misery from their oppressed populations and set their minds and energies free for the great and hazardous tasks of political reconstruction which now face them on every hand. Hunger does not breed reform; it

breeds madness and all the ugly distempers that make an ordered life impossible.

For with the fall of the ancient governments which rested like an incubus on the peoples of the Central Empires has come political change not merely, but revolution; and revolution which seems as yet to assume no final and ordered form but to run from one fluid change to another, until thoughtful men are forced to ask themselves with what governments and of what sort are we about to deal in the making of the covenants of peace. With what authority will they meet us, and with what assurance that their authority will abide and sustain securely the international arrangements into which we are about to enter?

There is here matter for no small anxiety and misgiving. When peace is made, upon whose promises and engagements besides our own is it to rest?

Let us be perfectly frank with ourselves and admit that these questions cannot be satisfactorily answered now or at once. But the moral is not that there is little hope of any early answer that will suffice. It is only that we must be patient and helpful and mindful above all of the great hope and confidence that lie at the heart of what is taking place.

*Excesses accomplish nothing. Unhappy Russia has furnished abundant recent proof of that. Disorder immediately defeats itself. If excesses should occur, if disorder should for a time raise its head, a sober second thought will follow and a day of constructive action, if we help and do not hinder.*

*The present and all that it holds belongs to the nations and the peoples who preserved their self-control and the*

*orderly processes of their governments; the future to those who prove themselves the true friends of mankind.* To conquer with arms is to make only a temporary conquest; to conquer the world by earning its esteem is to make permanent conquest.

I am confident that the nations that have learned the discipline of freedom and that have settled with self-possession to its ordered practice are now about to make conquest of the world by the sheer power of example and of friendly helpfulness.

*The peoples who have but just come out from under the yoke of arbitrary government and who are now coming at last into their freedom will never find the treasures of liberty they are in search of if they look for them by the light of the torch. They will find that every pathway that is stained with the blood of their own brothers leads to the wilderness, not to the seat of their hope.*

*They are now face to face with their initial test. We must hold the light steady until they find themselves. And in the meantime, if it be possible, we must establish a peace that will justly define their place among the nations, remove all fear of their neighbors and of their former masters and enable them to live in security and contentment when they have set their own affairs in order.*

I, for one, do not doubt their purpose or their capacity. There are some happy signs that they know and will choose the way of self-control and peaceful accommodation. If they do, we shall put our aid at their disposal in every way that we can. If they do not, we must await with patience and sympathy the awakening and recovery that will assuredly come at last.

### XIII. THE MANDATE OF HUMANITY

(*From Speech at Manchester, England, December 30, 1918*)

When we analyze the present situation and the future that we now have to mold and control, it seems to me there is no other thought than that that can guide us. You know that the United States has always felt from the very beginning of her story that she must keep herself separate from any kind of connection with European politics. I want to say very frankly to you that she is not now interested in European politics, but she is interested in the partnership of right between America and Europe. If the future had nothing for us but a new attempt to keep the world at a right poise by a balance of power the United States would take no interest, because she will join no combination of power which is not a combination of all of us. She is not interested merely in the peace of Europe, but in the peace of the world. . . .

There is a great voice of humanity abroad in the world just now which he who cannot hear is deaf. There is a great compulsion of the common conscience now in existence which if any statesman resist, will gain for him the most unenviable eminence in history. We are not obeying the mandate of parties or of politics. We are obeying the mandate of humanity.



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